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GARDINER

BUNKER HILL

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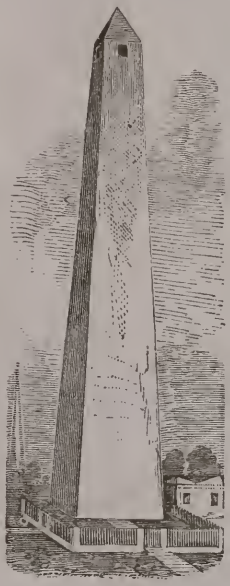
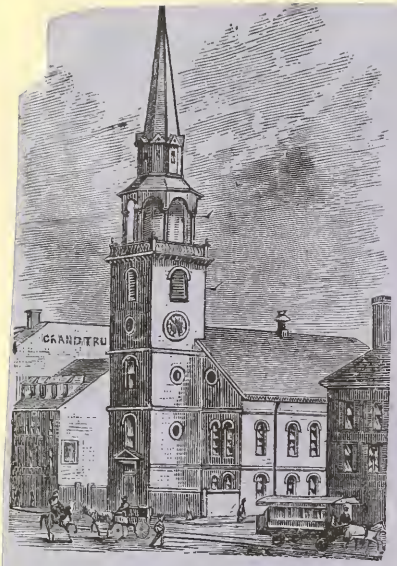
1775. 1875.



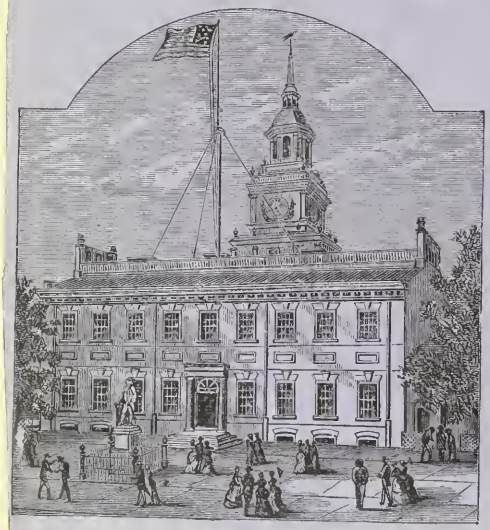
CENTENNIAL.



Old South Church.

The OLD SOUTH CHURCH one of the objects of interest le to Boston. Built in 1720. H was stimulated a public dis tis faction against the mode of E land's rule of the Colonies, t resulted in a war which e lives and treasures that coul not be so well counted as i later wars. But the benefits ar not yet fully realized ; the hope of mankind have been vastl encouraged to continue to striv for liberty and free governmen

Through Mr. George R Brine proprietor of the *Old Sout Clothing Store*, opposite the Ol South Church, in loaning u this truthful engraving of th old church, we are enabled t add to these pages another vis ble link between the past an present of our country's hi tory.



Independence Hall, Philadelphia.

Through David Cla & Son, our Printers, make use of the vie from Dorchester Heigh (now South Boston) the evacuation of Bosto by the British army, an of the fleet as it saile down the Harbor Marc 17, 1776. We also ad a cut of Independenc Hall, Philadelphia. Thu much of history is illu trated, and made speak more forcibly tha words in print—for a fa and the surroundings ar doubly impressive.

BUNKER HILL.

A CENTENNIAL ORATION,

DELIVERED BY

REV. A. S. GARDINER, A.M.,
Pastor of the Presbyterian Church, Reading, Mass.,

IN COMMEMORATION OF THE

BATTLE OF BUNKER HILL,

Fought June 17th, 1775.

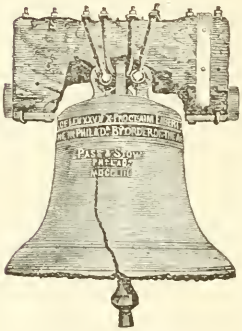
"*Dulce et decorum pro partria mori.*"

BOSTON:
DAVID CLAPP & SON, PRINTERS.
564 WASHINGTON STREET.
1877.

Checked
May 18[illegible]

XIX No. 4996

Continental Soldier.



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BATTLE OF BUNKER HILL.

A large audience assembled at the Presbyterian Church in Reading, on Sunday, June 13th, to hear a discourse from the pastor, Rev. A. S. Gardiner, upon the above subject. The pulpit was adorned with bouquets of flowers, and with a small gilt eagle surmounting a small American flag. The portion of Scripture read were the 15th chapter of Exodus, and the 124th Psalm.

A map of Boston and vicinity and a diagram of the redoubt on Bunker Hill were exhibited on the blackboard and explained.

The causes of the war, said the speaker, were set forth in my discourse on the battles of Lexington and Concord. These took place April 19th, and the battle of Bunker Hill two months later, June 17th, 1775. The first showed the determination of the people to resist, and the last to what degree and by what means resistance was to be continued.

The British forces, numbering about 10,000, were now in Boston. The city was fortified at numerous points. A few, however, remained exposed, and among them Dorchester Heights, and the heights of Charlestown. It was resolved by Gen. Gage to attend to the latter without delay. Knowledge of this purpose was made known to the Provincial Congress sitting at Cambridge, when it was determined to anticipate the movement by occupying the heights of Charlestown with the colonial forces. Accordingly on the night of June 16th, Gen. William Prescott, with about a thousand men, marched at nine o'clock from Cambridge, and proceeded to Breed's Hill, where at twelve o'clock, midnight, they began to throw up intrenchments, and to build a strong redoubt. Breed's Hill was only a continuation of the chain of heights from Bunker Hill, and is laid down on the map drawn by a British officer, Lieut. Page, by the name of Bunker Hill; while what was known as Bunker Hill, is there laid down as Breed's Hill. Gen. Prescott and his associates felt that their orders left them with a wide discretion, and on due consideration they resolved to throw up the redoubt upon the eminence nearest to Boston, and also, as a further defense, to fortify Bunker Hill.

The British war ships lay at anchor in Charles River, and war transports and floating batteries were stationed at important points, ready for service at a moment's warning.

The nights were short, and the thousand men worked with a will upon the intrenchments and redoubt. They knew that at the dawn of day they would be discovered by the enemy. The redoubt was laid out by Col. Gridley. It was eight rods square, and its plan was a master-piece of civil engineering. By the well-directed labor of the night, the intrenchments were raised about six feet high. They were first discovered by the sailors on board the men-of-war. The "Lively" opened fire immediately, and without orders from the admiral. This was checked, but was followed directly from a battery of six guns from Copp's Hill, Boston, twelve hundred yards distant, and from the shipping. But the Americans kept steadily at their work in the intrenchments.

As the day advanced, the enemy were observed to be in motion at Boston. It was apparent that the Americans were gathering strength every hour, and that something suited to check them must be done.

Different views upon the best means of accomplishing this were discussed in council by Gens. Gage, Clinton, and Burgoyne. It was finally decided to make the attack in front, and the troops were ordered to parade.

At nine o'clock Col Prescott called a council of war. It was represented by the officers that the men were worn out by the labors of the night, and in no condition for action. But Gen. Prescott decided not to relieve them, saying that the men who built the intrenchments could best defend them. He consented, however, to send to Gen Ward for reinforcements. Maj. John Brooks of Reading was the messenger sent. He reached head-quarters at Cambridge at 10 o'clock. At 11 o'clock Gen. Ward ordered the regiments of Cols. Stark and Reed of New Hampshire to reinforce Col. Prescott.

Meanwhile the British men-of-war and floating batteries played on the intrenchments and redoubt. At 11 o'clock the works were about completed, and the men piled up the intrenching tools and rested from their labors.

By this time Gen. Gage had finished his preparations for the proposed attack. About 12 o'clock the regiments marched through the streets of Boston to their places of embarkation. Suddenly the guns opened from Copp's Hill, from the ships of war, and from the floating batteries. The fleet with the troops moved from North Battery and Long Wharf towards Charlestown. History says, "The sun was shining in meridian splendor, and the scarlet uniforms, the glistening armor, the brass artillery, the regular movements of the boats, the flashes of fire, the belchings of smoke, and the roar of cannon, presented an imposing spectacle."

When the news of the landing of the British troops at Charlestown reached Cambridge, the bells were rung, drums beat to arms, and troops pressed forward to reinforce the Americans. Col. Prescott and his wearied men saw the landing of Gen. Howe and his veteran troops, and also the empty barges returning to Boston for more. It was evident that the crisis was approaching. This was at 2 o'clock in the afternoon. The reinforcements from Gen. Ward were therefore looked for with the deepest solicitude, but they did not come. Neither were provisions sent in sufficient quantities. But while the spirits of the men were depressed under a sense of neglect, they were suddenly relieved by the arrival of Gens. Warren, Pomeroy, and Putnam.

To meet and thwart an attempt of the enemy to flank the Americans in the redoubt, Col. Prescott directed the Connecticut troops, under Captain Knowlton, to march down the hill towards Mystic River, and oppose the enemy's right. Cols. Stark and Reed arrived, and took position with Capt. Knowlton, at the rail fence.

At 3 o'clock P.M, the lines of defense were manned. The original detachment under Col. Prescott, except the Connecticut troops, were at the redoubt and breastwork. Other troops joined them just previous to the action, and Gen. Warren among them. The remaining troops were disposed of at the rail fence, and at other points.

Gen. Howe, the commander of the British forces, had his troops, 3000 in number, in readiness now to advance. Having addressed them in words of confidence and encouragement, he moved them forward. It was a moment of supreme interest. The Americans coolly awaited their approach. Their officers ordered them to reserve their fire until the British were within ten or twelve rods, and then to wait until the word was given. At length the enemy reached the prescribed distance, when Prescott cried out, "Now men! Now's your time! Take aim! Fire!" There was a simultaneous discharge from the redoubt and breastwork that literally strewed the ground with the dead and wounded of the foe. Gen. Pigot, one of the British commanders, ordered a retreat. Victory for the time remained with the Americans.

Gen. Howe, who had led the right wing against the rail fence, encountered such a deadly fire that he, too, was compelled to retire.

The success of the Americans in this their first serious and regular encounter with British troops, gave them courage and filled them with enthusiasm. The charm of invincibility, which had hitherto hung around disciplined soldiers as opposed to the raw yeomanry of the colonies, was forever broken. Hence with less apprehension than before, the Americans awaited the return of the foe.

Gen. Howe in a short time rallied his troops, and immediately ordered another attack. In making their renewed advance, the enemy were compelled to step over the bodies of their fallen countrymen.

At this juncture, as if designed to increase the sublimity and to intensify the horrors of the scene, Charlestown was suddenly wrapped in flames. A combination ensued of the most terrific accompaniments of war. A disciplined army, chagrined by defeat and fearful slaughter, advancing to retrieve their lost honor; the roar of cannonry from war ships and batteries; the clouds of smoke from burning buildings; the flames leaping forward from street to street in their mad work of destruction; the vast number of spectators from the houses and eminences in Boston and its vicinity; the solicitude of the population in the surrounding towns; and, above all, the band of undisciplined but resolute men waiting behind their imperfect breastworks a second attack, and standing in defense of a cause which they held dearer than life; these things presented a conjunction of circumstances rarely equaled, never surpassed, in the annals of history. Gen. Burgoyne, who beheld it, says, "It was a complication of horror and importance beyond anything that ever came to my lot to witness."

The second attack was not more successful than the first. The results were indeed even more fatal. Whole ranks of officers and men fell before the intrenchments. Col. Prescott spoke of it as "a continued stream of fire from the first discharge until the retreat." The British were compelled again to give way, and they withdrew in even greater disorder than before, many running towards the boats.

But British honor was now at stake. Gen. Howe was resolved to make still another assault upon the American lines.

Some of his officers remonstrated against this decision, and the army showed many signs of unwillingness to renew the conflict. Meanwhile a reinforcement had arrived from Boston, and Gen. Clinton seeing the discomfiture of Gen. Howe came over to lend him his aid. The third attempt was made with more caution than the first and second. The soldiers were directed to lay aside their knapsacks, and a disposition of the cannon was directed that would concentrate every energy upon the redoubt.

This new plan of attack was quickly discerned by Col. Prescott. But that which now filled his mind with apprehension for the result was the insufficient supply of powder that remained. A few artillery cartridges constituted the whole stock. These he ordered to be opened, and the powder to be distributed. He charged his soldiers "not to waste a kernel of it, but to make certain that every shot should tell." This scant supply of ammunition, and a few bayonets, were all that were left for the defense of the redoubt against the third assault. But Prescott and his men continued

undaunted. They resolved to defend their position to the last extremity.

The British now began their third ascent. They advance to within a distance of twenty yards of the lines, when the Americans open fire. Under the deadly discharge the enemy waver for an instant, and then press forward. The want of powder is soon perceived in the slackened fire of the Americans. The redoubt is now attacked on three sides. Those of the Americans who had bayonets stood near the walls, and those who had not were directed to fall to the back part of the redoubt, and fire at such of the enemy as might first scale the parapet. The ammunition was now all gone. The redoubt was soon successfully scaled. Gen. Pigot, by the aid of a tree, mounted one corner of it, and was followed by his men, when one side of it literally bristled with bayonets. The conflict was now carried on hand to hand.

Many stood and received wounds with swords and bayonets. But the British continued to enter, and were advancing towards the Americans, when Col. Prescott gave the order to retreat. When the Americans left the redoubt, the dust was so great that the outlet was scarcely visible. Some ran over the top, and others hewed their way through the enemy's ranks. Prescott, among the last to leave, was surrounded by the British, who made passes at him with the bayonet, which he skillfully parried with his sword. "He did not run, but stepped along with his sword up," escaping unharmed, though his clothing was pierced in several places.

The British, with cheers, took possession of the works, but immediately formed and delivered a destructive fire upon the retreating troops. At this point in the conflict Gen. Warren fell.

Meanwhile the rail fence was successfully defended by Stark, Knowlton, and Reed, and thus the main body, hastening in disorder from the redoubt, were saved. Presently the whole army of the Americans were in full retreat. They passed over the top of Bunker Hill. Here Gen. Putnam tried to rally the retreating forces. "Make a stand here!" he exclaimed, "We can stop them yet! In God's name, form, and give them one shot more!" But all efforts to arrest the retreat were vain. The wearied soldiers felt that all possible to mortal prowess had been done, and that the want of ammunition and of adequate support were a sufficient warrant for continued retreat. Yet the son of Col. Prescott, and author of his memoirs, says, "My father always thought he could have maintained his post with the handful of men under his command, exhausted as they were by fatigue and hunger, if they had been supplied with sufficient ammunition and with bayonets. In their last attack, the British wavered under the first fire of the Americans, and if it could have been continued he felt confident they would have been repulsed, and never have rallied again."

In a letter dated Cambridge, June 19th, 1775, and written partly by Capt.

Chester and partly by Lieut. Page, the following observations occur: "After the alarm, on our march down (to Charlestown), we met many of our worthy friends, wounded, sweltering in their blood, carried on the shoulders of their fellow soldiers. Judge you what must have been our feelings at this shocking spectacle. The orders were 'Press on, press on; our brethren are suffering, and will be cut off.' We pushed on, and came to the field of battle through the cannonading of the ships. Bombs, chain shot, ring shot, and double-headed shot, flew as thick as hailstones, but, thank heaven, few of our men suffered by them; but when we mounted the summit—where the engagement was—good God, how the balls flew! I freely acknowledge I never had such a tremor come over me before. We covered the retreat (of the soldiers from the redoubt) by a brisk fire from our small arms."

The battle of Bunker Hill began at 3½ o'clock P.M., and ended at 5 o'clock. During the contest 3500 Americans were engaged, but only 1500 at any one time. About 500 covered the retreat.

The British numbered about 3000. The slaughter was fearful, especially on the side of the British. Of these, 1054 fell. Of the Americans, 140 were killed, 271 wounded, and 30 captured.

In honor of Middlesex County, to which we belong, it may be said that, at the time of the battle, the headquarters of the Provincial Congress and of the army at Cambridge were within its border; that to it belonged Col. Prescott and his regiment, and Col. Thomas Gardiner, a noble patriot and soldier, who fell wounded on the field. History tells us that while a party were carrying Col. Gardiner off, he had an affecting interview with his son, a youth of nineteen, who was anxious to aid in bearing him away. His heroic father forbade it, and was borne on a litter of rails over Bunker Hill. He died on July 3d, and on the 5th was buried with the honors of war. Washington's orders, issued July 4th, 1775, say of him, that he was "a brave and gallant officer, who fought, bled, and died, in the cause of his country and mankind."

In addition to the above, it may be stated that the town of Reading was represented in the battle by Mr. Aaron Parker, whose children, Mrs. Silas Smith, aged 92 years, Aaron Parker, aged 88, Dea. Jabez D. Parker, aged 82 years, all of Reading; John Parker, of Woburn, and Rev. B. W. Parker, aged 72, of the Sandwich Islands, still survive him.

The most conspicuous victim of the terrible conflict was Gen. Joseph Warren. A whole discourse might well be devoted to this eminent soldier and patriot. When remonstrance was urged by Elbridge Gerry, against his taking part in the battle, Warren, displaying the spirit, and perhaps expecting the fate of Leonidas, replied: "Dulce et decorum pro partria mori." A short time before the action commenced, he asked of Putnam, where he could

be most useful. Putnam directed him to the redoubt, remarking, that "there he would be covered." "Don't think," said Warren, "I come to seek a place of safety; but tell me where the onset will be the most furious." Putnam, pointing to the redoubt, said, "That is the enemy's object, and if that can be defended, the day is ours." Thither Gen. Warren went. He was received with great enthusiasm, mingled in the fight, and was among the last to leave the redoubt. After retreating a few rods, a ball struck him in the forehead, and he fell to the ground. He fell with his face to the foe. The fatal bullet pierced the brain which had been fertile in expedients for the defense of the colonies, and which had helped form the comprehensive plans that looked to the independence of the country. He fell in the crisis of the battle. He fell at the age of thirty-six, in the very prime of his early manhood. With his slain countrymen he was buried like Leonidas and his Spartans, on the field where he fell. But though he fell thus early, both in life and in the great conflict, yet, in the language of the committee of safety, "His memory will be endeared to his countrymen, and to the worthy in every part and age of the world as long as virtue and valor shall be esteemed among mankind."

And who will forget the eloquent apostrophe of the American orator to this illustrious patriot, when the corner-stone of the monument was laid; "Ah! Him! the first great martyr in this great cause! Him! the premature victim of his own self-devoting heart! Him! the head of our civil councils, and the destined leader of our military bands, whom nothing brought hither but the unquenchable fire of his own spirit! Him! cut off by Providence in the hour of overwhelming anxiety and thick gloom; falling ere he saw the star of his country rise; pouring out his generous blood like water, before he knew whether it would fertilize a land of freedom or of bondage! how shall I struggle with the emotions that stifle the utterance of thy name! Our poor work may perish; but thine shall endure! This monument may moulder away; the solid ground it rests upon may sink down to a level with the sea; but thy memory shall not fail! Wheresoever among men a heart shall be found that beats to the transports of patriotism and liberty, its aspirations shall be to claim kindred with thy spirit!"

The battle of Bunker Hill had an inspiring influence upon all the subsequent battles of the revolution. When Washington heard of the terrible conflict, he inquired if the militia had stood the fire of the regulars. When told that they had not only stood that fire, but had reserved their own until the enemy were within eight rods, when they poured it in with tremendous effect, "Then," said he, "the liberties of the country are safe!"

Besides, by this battle the die was cast. Nothing remained but the arbitrament of the sword. The controversy between England and her colonies must be decided on the field.

The influence of the battle of Bunker Hill has not diminished with the lapse of time. Taking its place besides Thermopylæ and Marathon, it rises superior to both, as it stands related to still nobler issues, and to a wider realm. It was fought by men who understood and rightly prized liberty regulated by law; and upon a continent destined largely through its influence to become the theatre of the grandest experiment of man's ability, under God, to establish and maintain a government upon the basis of equal rights to all. The success of that experiment is now complete. The demonstration has been given. And the monument which marks the spot where the patriots fought, is at once an emblem of the solidity of their principles, and of the loftiness of their aspirations.

The nation could not rest until this monument had been reared. The names of noble men,—of Webster, Alston, Willard, Perkins, Stewart, and Everett, are in the catalogue of its projectors. Science, eloquence and art, were made tributary to it. Woman lent her willing and welcome aid. The monument ascended to its destined height, and the capstone, bearing, as it rose, the stripes and stars, waved by the fearless hand of one actually seated upon it, settled, amid the shouts and astonishment of the multitudes below, to the place of its last repose.

One hundred years have come and gone, and wars and political changes on a colossal scale have taken place among other nations. But among them all, no battle has the significance of that which we commemorate to-day; no monument like that on Bunker Hill, speaking of triumph achieved by the friends of civil liberty, has risen from any of the fields of European conflict; no revolution abroad has been followed by the recognition and establishment of the principles embodied in the organic law of the American Republic. Alas! Alas! that Lafayette, and Kosciusco, and Kossuth, with their associates, should have toiled in vain! In vain? No! Not in vain! For

> "Freedom's battle once begun,
> Bequeathed from bleeding sire to son,
> Though baffled oft, is ever won."

We lament that the triumph of liberty in other lands has been deferred. We rejoice with joy unutterable that it has been achieved in our own. The centennial gathering of the descendants and friends of the founders of the republic, will be a living testimony from myriad hearts to their high appreciation of the matchless boon which they are permitted to inherit.

Then welcome! welcome! sons and daughters of New England, to the spot rendered sacred by patriot blood! Welcome! welcome! fellow citizens of the great republic, to this birthplace of American liberty and national independence! Come, look upon the granite shaft piercing the heavens;

contemplate its rugged simplicity; and while you gaze breathe one prayer that, reared to the memory of the noble dead, it may stand the symbol of Liberty and Union, of Virtue and Religion, not only through another centennary, but onward, onward, to the end of time! Stand, till

> "Like the baseless fabric of a vision,
> The cloud-capt towers, the gorgeous palaces,
> The solemn temples, the great globe itself,—
> Yea all, which it inherit, shall dissolve,
> And like an unsubstantial pageant faded,
> Leave not a wreck behind!"

This patriotic and historical production of Dr. A. S. Gardiner impressed me at its delivery—I resolved to turn it to account, and assisted to publish it. It is now reprinted and improved by an additional map. By advertising this in place of the universal "Chromo," with our Catalogue, I am enabled to acquaint the public that I have something for sale of practical utility to all lovers of trees and plants.

The READING NURSERY is located at the very head waters of the Mystic River, at READING HIGHLANDS, some 15 miles by the course of the river, or 11 miles from Bunker Hill by the Boston & Maine Railroad or the highway.

We have long had more or less to do in fitting up *public* and *private* grounds, and have made it a point to add to our collection all that we find practical for this latitude.

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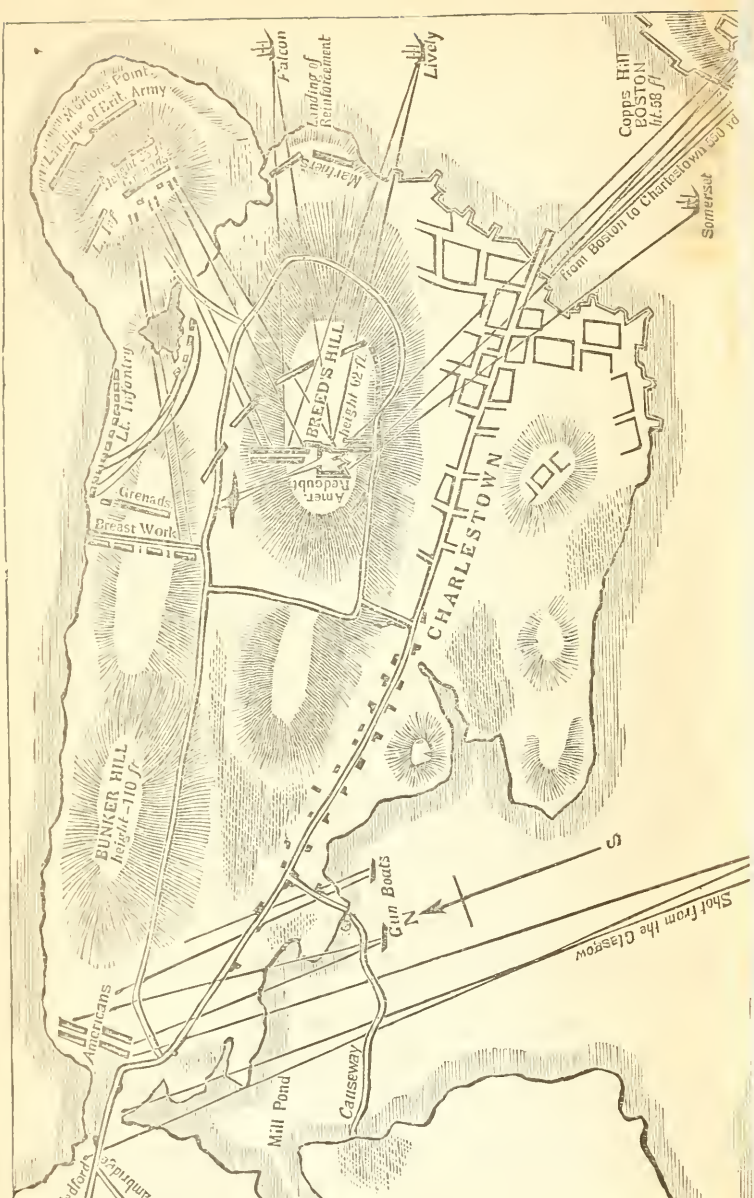
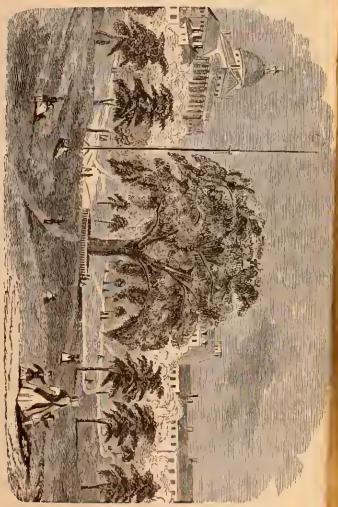


In this Second Edition we make use of an additional Map that shows the topography of Charlestown peninsula from the Neck, near the branching of the Medford and Cambridge r (where lines and stations of the Boston & Maine and Eastern Railroad are situated, now c Somerville Station). Morton's Point is shown where the British landed. *Charlestown Yard* is there now. The Mystic River and flats lie along the East and North of the additi Map. The streets and road leading towards the Neck, and scattered houses, are shown; the roads leading among the hills of Charlestown as they were 100 years ago.



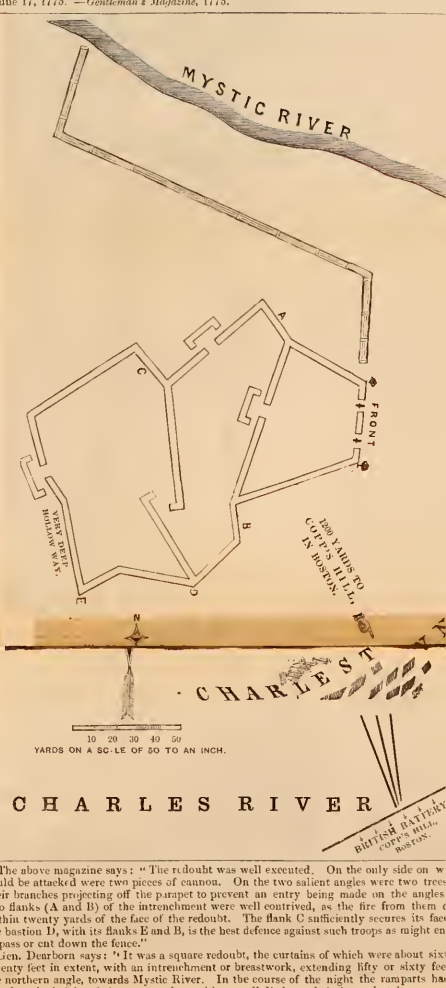
THE OLD ELM--BOSTON COMMON.
It was blown down Feb. 15, 1876.

EVACUATION OF BOSTON BY THE BRITISH, MARCH 17, 1776.
As seen from Dorchester Heights, now South Boston.

DIAGRAM.

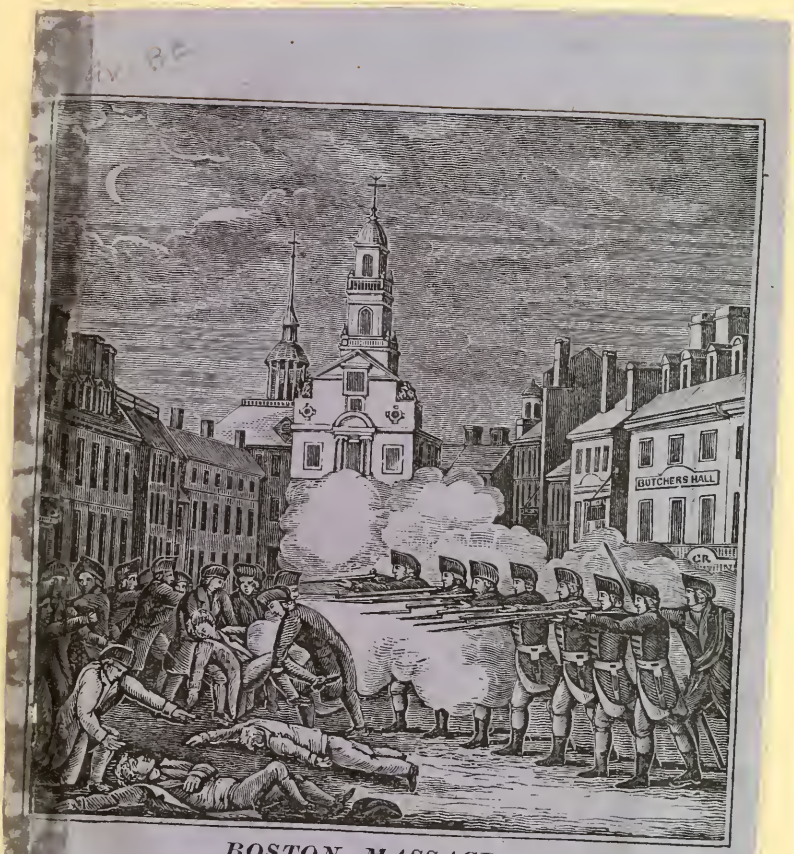
The proportion of the redoubt and intrenchment as copied from the English authority, below, is not in proportion to the surroundings, nor does it coincide with some other ac of the work; but it more fully illustrates the rail fence that was of such moment in the of the day. It was bravely defended by Cols. Stark's and Reed's men from New Ham (our native State—Stark lived and is buried at Manchester, N. H., only 7 miles from Bedfo birth-place. Our older neighbors were in the battle. We clearly remember some of the in their extreme old age, and to have seen them cry as they told of their trials). *See add Map on last page.*

"Plan of the Redoubt and Intrenchment on the Heights of Charlestown (commonly Bunker's Hill), opposite Boston, in New England, attacked and carried by his Majesty's June 17, 1775."—*Gentleman's Magazine*, 1775.



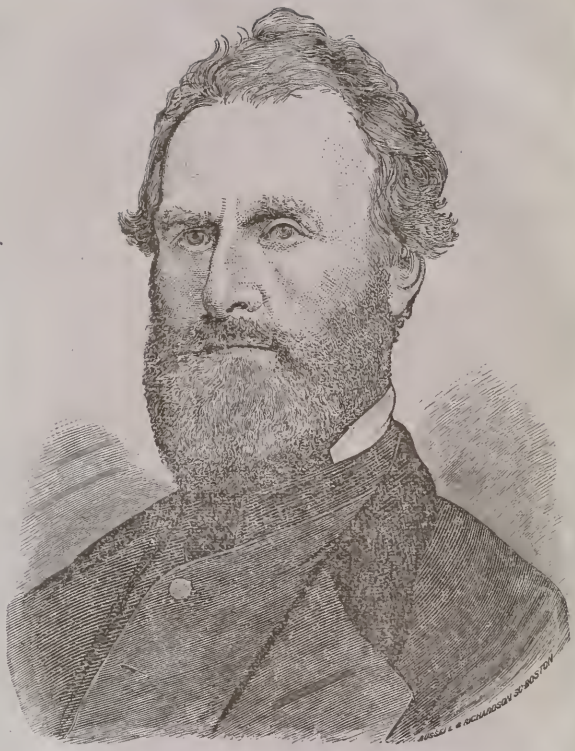
The above magazine says: "The redoubt was well executed. On the only side on w could be attacked were two pieces of cannon. On the two salient angles were two trees their branches projecting off the parapet to prevent an entry being made on the angles two flanks (A and B) of the intrenchment were well contrived, as the fire from them c within twenty yards of the face of the redoubt. The flank C sufficiently secures its face the bastion D, with its flanks E and B, is the best defence against such troops as might en to pass or cut down the fence."

Gen. Dearborn says: "It was a square redoubt, the curtains of which were about sixt seventy feet in extent, with an intrenchment or breastwork, extending fifty or sixty fee the northern angle, towards Mystic River. In the course of the night the ramparts ha raised to the height of six or seven feet, with a small ditch at their base; but it was ye such imperfect state."



BOSTON MASSACRE.

This engraving is a copy of an old painting that can be seen at this date, April 2, 1877, in the Old South Church. The Old State House is yet standing in State Street, called in colonial times King Street. Railroad Ticket Offices and Telegraph Offices now occupy its two fronts.



J. W. Manning

Reading, Mass.